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Message Text

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66
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 HEW-02 /071 W
---------- 062144
R 020340Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4952
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMCONSUL UDORN
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, LA, TH, MY
SUBJ: PGNU SPOKESMAN'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF JULY 31

1. PGNU SPOKESMAN OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG HELD PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 31 TO REPORT ON PREVIOUS DAY'S CABINET MEETING. HE SAID CABINET HAD DECIDED TO PLACE JOINT POLICE AND JOINT MILITARY PROTECTIVE FORCES (SET UP UNDER VIENTIANE AGREEMENT OF FEB-RUARY 21, 1973 TO OPERATE IN NEUTRALIZED CITIES OF VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG) UNDER MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR AND DEFENSE, RESPECTIVELY. ACCORDING TO OUDAY, SITUATION HAD EVOLVED TO SUCH A POINT THAT TWO FORCES HAD PRACTICALLY NOTHING TO DO.

2. OUDAY STATED THAT LAO STAMPS PRINTED TO COMMEMMORATE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL (VIENTIANE 5060, NOTAL) WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR CIRCULATION OR SALE; THEY ARE PURELY AND SIMPLY ANNULLED. IN PRINCIPLE, ANY NEW ISSUE OF STAMPS SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED BY A PRIME MINISTERIAL ORDER.

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3. OUDAY SAID THAT IN ORDER TO ECONOMIZE FOREIGN EXCHANGE,

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TRANSFERS OF FUNDS FOR NON-SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD WOULD NO LONGER BE AUTHORIZED AS OF AUG 1. ALSO, STUDENTS OTHER THAN THOSE ON SCHOLARSHIP WOULD NO LONGER BE ELIGIBLE TO EXCHANGE KIP FOR HARD CURRENCY AT 750 RATE TO PURCHASE AIRLINE TICKETS.

4. CABINET ALSO APPROVED NEW LIST OF COMMODITIES AUTHORIZED FOR IMPORT UNDER FEOF FINANCING. MINISTRY OF FINANCE IS TO PUBLISH DETAILS OF LIST IN LAO PRESSE. (LIST PUBLISHED AUG 1 AND WILL BE REPORTED SEPTEL.) CABINET ALSO APPROVED TEXT OF PRINCIPLES FOR REGULATING THE CUTTING AND EXPORT OF LUMBER; MINISTRY OF ECONOMY IS TO PUBLISH THE DOCUMENT.

5. IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION OUDAY STATED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS THAT:
(A) MINISTRY OF HEALTH IS DRAWING UP LIST OF RULES GOVERNING MEDICAL CARE AND FURNISHING OF MEDICINES; LIST WILL BE SUBMITTED TO NEXT CABINET MEETING. "THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO GIVE FREE PUBLIC MEDICAL SERVICE. MEDICAL CARE IS FREE, AS ARE COMMONLY USED MEDICINES. HOWEVER, FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED SPECIAL MEDICINE, I DON'T KNOW IF ANY GOVERNMENT CAN HELP THEM."
(B) CABINET DID NOT DISCUSS JULY 27 SHOOTING INCIDENT IN WHICH POLICE PREVENTED SMUGGLING OF SEVERAL VEHICLES ACROSS THE MEKONG
TO THAILAND. OUDAY DID NOT KNOW IF
THAI RIVER PATROL WERE INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT.
(C) CURRENT "TRIPS" TO VIENGSAY BY ARMY AND POLICE OFFICERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS WERE DESIRED BY PARTICIPANTS, WHO HAD STATED ON MANY OCCASIONS THEIR WISH TO GO TO NEW "CAPITAL" OF LIBERATED ZONE. OUDAY BELIEVED PRIME MINISTER HAD APPROVED "TRIPS." IN ADDITION, MINISTER OF DEFENSE HAD ASSURED OUDAY PERSONALLY THAT WIVES OF PARTICIPANTS ARE AUTHORIZED TO VISIT HUSBANDS IN VIENGSAY. OUDAY THEN WAXED ELOQUENT ON THE MANY DELIGHTS OF VIENGSAY AND VICINITY.
(D) NATIONAL BUDGET HAD NOT BEEN SUBMITTED TO CABINET. IT WAS STILL BEING YUDIED, AND SOME MINISTRIES WERE LATE IN MAKING THEIR SUBMISSIONS.
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6. LAO PRESSE ON JULY 31 ANNOUNCED THAT (PHAGNA) OUAN SNITH (PRONOUNCED SANIT), LAO AMBASSADOR TO THAILAND, HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AS AMBASSADOR TO MALAYSIA.
CHAPMAN

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